

I implore you to reconsider the closing of the Kensington hatchery and restore the \$195K to keep this extremely unique and valuable resource operational. The Kensington hatchery is central to providing not only recreational opportunities for CT citizens' young and old, it also is critical for the environmental awareness and education of thousands of children enrolled in Trout in the Classroom (TIC) and Salmon in the classroom (SIC) in over a 100 schools across the state. As I am sure you must be well aware that if Kensington is closed we will lose some genetically important strains of Atlantic Salmon and Brown Trout.... forever. In addition, the revenues (indirectly and directly) generated in fishing for these species far exceed the cost of operating the hatchery.

In the proposed budget of \$40 million surely there are areas where savings can be identified and be better utilized to keep Kensington operational. You can start with the silly game of the proposed fractional decrease of the sales tax. Having worked in the public sector for many years I know there are better economic opportunities to eliminate waste and focus on things that truly benefit its people. If you want to really want have an impact on the planet there is no better way than getting people connected with the natural world. People who are connected are people who will care, protect, and restore nature... Kensington Hatchery is fundamental to this aim.

Again, please reconsider the closing of a very valuable resource that is the Kensington hatchery.

Respectfully,

John Preston
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